



AMORPHA BRACHYCARPA E. J. Palmer, sp. nov.
Photograph of the type specimen

CONSPECTUS OF THE GENUS AMORPHA

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Plate 36 and text figures

AMORPHA, a genus of leguminous plants of the tribe Psoraleae, is so far as known confined to the temperate and semi-tropical parts of North America, ranging from the Connecticut valley and Saskatchewan to Florida and northern Mexico. One little known species has also been described from further south in Mexico. All of the known species are shrubs of rather uniform habit and characters. About 60 names for species have been proposed of which 20, including one new one, are recognized as valid in the present treatment. There are also several varieties and forms, some of which have previously been described as species by other authors, and a few that are here described for the first time.

Amorpha is rather closely related to the cosmopolitan genus *Psoralea* and to the genera *Dalea* (*Parosela*) and *Eysenhardtia*, the second of which ranges over most of western North America and the last is represented by a few species in the arid southwestern states and in Mexico and Central America.

The genus *Amorpha* was established by Linnaeus in 1753, *Species Plantarum* II. 743, based upon a plate published in *Hortus Cliffortianus* in 1737, showing a flowering branch of *Amorpha fruticosa* which thus becomes the type species of the genus. In 1788 a second species *A. herbacea*, was described by Walter, and in 1804 Desfontaines published the name *Amorpha glabra*, which was briefly described three years later by Persoon. Willdenow and Michaux, in 1796 and 1803, added two more names, which proved to be synonyms of Walter's species. The names of several other species were added to the list by Nuttall, Pursh, and Rafinesque from 1813 to 1817, one of which, by the last named author, is unrecognizable. In the meantime Schkuhr had in 1796 published the names *Amorpha perforata* and *A. nonperforata*, which have generally been regarded as applying to mere forms of *A. fruticosa*, and treated as synonyms. When Torrey and Gray issued the first volume of the *Flora of North America* in 1838 they recognized eight species, descriptions of three of which were published for the first time. Dr. Gray does not seem, however, to have made much progress in understanding the genus, for in 1845 he wrote in *Plantae Lindheimerianae*: "I know of no constant characters for distinguishing *A. glabra*, Desf., *A. Caroliniana*, Croome, *A. nana*, Nutt., *Bot. Mag.*, and *A. laevigata*,